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Letter dated 27 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward a letter dated 27 October 2011 from Mr. Osman Saleh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea, addressed to you (see annex), in connection with the draft resolution on Eritrea and its annex.

I would be most grateful if the attached letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council

(*Signed*) Araya **Desta**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 27 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing this letter to raise serious issues of concern to my country, including the annex to the draft resolution submitted a few days ago containing a list of Eritrean entities "designated for asset freeze". Eritrea finds the submission of the annex to the draft resolution tabled at the Security Council totally erroneous and unacceptable.

The Government of the State of Eritrea recently presented to the Security Council sanctions Committee its comprehensive response to the allegations made in the latest report of the Somalia-Eritrea Monitoring Group (S/2011/433). As you might have noted in its comprehensive response, Eritrea has provided accurate information regarding the status and activities of the Red Sea Corporation and Himbol Company. The activities and status of these two companies are in complete conformity with international standards. As to "Segen" and "Gedem", also mentioned in the annex, they are two construction companies that are actively and solely engaged in construction work throughout the country, including road building, water and soil conservation, and agricultural infrastructure projects. In fact, it is obvious that those who submitted the list missed the facts and did not bother to check as evidenced by their claims that "Segen" is a "transport company". Segen is a construction company.

It has become evident that the list of entities was also, like the draft resolution itself, consolidated and provided by the Ethiopian Government, which has consistently maintained its hostility towards Eritrea. While the attempt to mislead the members of the Security Council is reprehensible in itself, the motive behind such action is more dangerous. In addition to its desire to block remittances from the Eritrean diaspora and revenues from the mining sector, Ethiopia is now seeking to completely block construction activities, which constitute the source of employment for many citizens. This is tantamount to starving the Eritrean people and derailing the progress made in poverty eradication and economic development.

Eritrea is convinced that peace and development in the Horn of Africa can only be attained through adherence to the rule of law, mutual respect and cooperation between the countries in the region. In this connection, it is important to note that Ethiopia is subverting Eritrea's efforts to contribute to regional peace and development by unilaterally blocking Eritrea's return to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Eritrea's move to reactivate its membership has been applauded by many in the international community, including the Executive Secretary of IGAD. Despite Ethiopia's unjustified obstacles my Government will continue to play its constructive role for peace and stability in our region.

Ethiopia's continued occupation of sovereign Eritrean territories, its push to impose new sanctions against Eritrea and its effort to prevent Eritrea from exercising its rights as part of a regional body must all be viewed in terms of an Ethiopian Government attempt to conceal its flagrant violation of international law from the international community and its desire to weaken and destabilize Eritrea. It is ironic that Ethiopia's wilful trampling of international law and several resolutions of the Security Council continues to be ignored. In effect, Ethiopia's action

constitutes the real threat to regional peace and security, and if it is allowed to succeed it will add fuel to an already explosive situation in the Horn of Africa.

My Government, therefore, appeals to the members of the Security Council to reject the draft resolution, as imposing sanctions on Eritrea would further exacerbate the already precarious situation in the region. Security Council resolution 1907 (2009) has already created its own imbalance in the region and has emboldened Ethiopia to publicly announce and engage for a "regime change" in Eritrea.

As stressed in Eritrea's comprehensive response to the allegations contained in the report of the Somalia-Eritrea Monitoring Group, the Government of Eritrea has complied with the provisions of resolution 1907 (2009), and I would most welcome any support in the consideration of lifting the sanctions regime imposed on Eritrea.

(*Signed*) Osman **Saleh**
Minister for Foreign Affairs